

focus on ESSEX



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ESSEX COUNTY HOLDS HEARING ON FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Freeholder Director Reita Greenstone hosted a public hearing and unveiled plans for a federal grant application totaling \$379,708.00 to finance a Family Violence Prevention Program which would include among other things a shelter for abused spouses and their families.

The project application calls for a joint County of Essex—State of New Jersey—City of Newark effort and would include \$329,708 in Law Enforcement Assistance Administration requests and \$50,000 in D.Y.F.S. requests.

This marks the first time that all three levels of government have come together to apply for such grant.

"Many government agencies have for years attempted to cope with the problems of child abuse and domestic violence," said Mrs. Greenstone.

"However, this marks the first real move in Essex County to consolidate these efforts and to deal with them in terms of immediate response as well as long-range efforts. It's a program that encompasses training, counselling and supportive services," she said.

In outlining the scope of the problem, she cited figures that indicate some 1,300 cases of atrocious assault and battery were prosecuted in Essex County in 1977 by wives against their husbands, as well as noting that D.Y.F.S. investigated 125 cases of battered children in the County in 1977 and that 50 men were on probation in Essex County in 1977 for beating their spouses.

The grant application calls for three major components:

- crisis intervention
- service delivery system
- long-range conflict solution with the family

The intervention procedure would provide an expanded and more clearly defined police role, as well as a 24 hour "Hot Line" professionally staffed to make proper referrals.

The service delivery aspect would include emergency medical aid, a temporary shelter, welfare assistance, screening services, as well as counseling and employment training. For those cases that should be formally and vigorously prosecuted, provision is made for an Assistant County Prosecutor and an Assistant Public Defender. Less serious offenders will be diverted from the litigation process to save court time and provide rehabilitation services.

The third phase would attempt to provide long range solutions—either family reunions with the support of counselling or separation with job training and employment counselling.

More than 35 people testified at the hearing in an attempt to underscore the need for a shelter in the county and to suggest ways of tying together a fragmented network of social services in order to create a complete victim service package.



Reviewing the agenda for the day's program are, from left, Connie Womoff of the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women, Freeholder Director Reita Greenstone, chairwoman of the hearing, and Sen. Wynona Lipman who testified on the status of current legislation.



Richard Sheola of the Dept. of Youth & Family Services testifies at the hearing as Freeholders Harry McEnroe and Thomas McCormack listen intently.



Director Greenstone welcomes Sylvia Johnson, Director of the Division on Women of the State of N.J.



Getting together before the program began were Alan Zalkind, Director of the Newark Department of Social Services, Director Greenstone, Freeholder McEnroe and Richard Sheola of DYFS.

people in the news

FREEHOLDER DIRECTOR REITA GREENSTONE was chosen to receive the 1978 Humanitarian of the Year Award by the Essex County Park Commission. The award is given annually in recognition of outstanding contributions to the needs and concerns of senior citizens. Mr. Silvio Rotundi, President of the Branch Brook Park Senior Citizen Club, presented the award at a luncheon attended by well over 400 seniors from throughout the County.

FREEHOLDER HARRY A. MCENROE was re-elected chairman of the Northwest New Jersey Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC). Members of the committee include the New Jersey Commissioner of Transportation, the Director of the Tri-State Regional Planning Commission, a representative of the New York-New Jersey Port Authority, Freeholders of ten New Jersey counties, as well as the Mayors of Newark and Jersey City. TCC meets quarterly and is empowered to discuss and approve a comprehensive program of transportation projects for each fiscal year as well as approve all federally funded transportation projects of regional significance in Northeast New Jersey.

FREEHOLDER THOMAS M. McCORMACK was honored as the Outstanding Young Democrat of 1978 by the Essex County Young Dems at their annual convention.

COUNTY REGISTER LARRIE STALKS was elected Divisional Chairwoman of the New Jersey Association of County Officers. She is the first woman to serve in that capacity.

WARDEN ALBERT COLLIER was installed recently as second vice president of the New Jersey County Jail Wardens Association.



\$2,100 HOME IMPROVEMENT CHECK to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Wells represents the completion of an aluminum siding job on their Belleville home. Making the presentation are Freeholder Director Reita Greenstone and Deputy Director Martin G. Scaturo.

First Home Loan Payout Approved

Essex County, through its Office of Community Development, recently presented its first check for a completed home improvement project to Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Wells of Belleville.

John Alati, Director of Community Development explained the check is an interest reduction subsidy to supplement a \$4,450 loan from the Fidelity Union Trust Company of Newark, payable at 3% interest. Mr. & Mrs. Wells, who have lived in Belleville for 20 years, are on a fixed income below the \$10,000 yearly limit required for participation in the program.

The project is designed to offer individual home owners in Essex County the opportunity of making home repairs at low interest rates. Presently there are nine municipalities participating: Belleville, Caldwell, Glen Ridge, Livingston, Maplewood, Montclair, Nutley, Roseland and West Orange. Three other towns are scheduled to join in July. They include North Caldwell, Cedar Grove and South Orange. Discussions are also underway with officials from Fairfield.

Eligible homeowners can receive up to \$10,000 for one family homes; up to \$12,000 for two family homes; and up to \$15,000 for three and four family dwellings. The primary benefit is an effective rate of interest of only 3% for the loan. Banks and savings institutions who have agreed to participate in the program, will make the loans, and the County will make an interest reduction grant to lower the market interest rate to 3%.

Freeholder Director Reita Greenstone noted that the program has grown in three years from nine towns receiving \$348,000, in 1976, and \$759,000, in 1977 to twelve towns scheduled to participate this year for a total of \$2.5 million in federal funds that Essex County has qualified for.

providing vocational training geared to realistic job placement opportunities."

County Supervisor Philip C. Rotondo, Chairman of the Board of School Estimate for the Vocational Schools, noted that, "In order for this program to become operational, we need to renovate several work areas at the Corrections Center." He added, "Preliminary preparation involves general painting, debris removal, flooring repair—all this can be done by the inmates themselves within the next few weeks."

Rotondo said, "The more detailed repairs such as ventilation, heating, plumbing and carpentry can be done with the cooperation of the County's Plants and Structures Department."

"We intend to fully comply with all the safety requirements so as to properly qualify for state approval and accreditation."

Vocational "Campus" Ready to Open

Essex County officials have announced plans to open a vocational educational training "campus" at the Essex County Correction Center in Caldwell.

Warden Arthur Magnusson and vocational school Superintendent George O'Connor targeted September 1, 1978 as opening day. The county has received preliminary approval from the State Department of Education for more than \$250,000 in funding.

The joint venture between these two county departments will see the vocational school staff six courses to be offered some 60-70 inmates. Subjects will include auto body repair, automotive repair, general building maintenance, food service preparation, welding and drafting.

"The program is unique in many ways," said Magnusson. "First, it provides opportunity for two agencies to work together in a cooperative effort; secondly, it's an attempt to provide vocational employment training to short-term inmates who can realistically look to potential placement within 18-30 months; and finally it offers the inmate the opportunity to continue his training at one of the County's Technical Career Centers after release."

Magnusson said that an average of 2,000 inmates come through the prison system each year and that "some attempt must be made to attack the rate of recidivism by

KIDS AND COMPUTERS "ON LINE" AT THE YOUTH HOUSE

The Essex County Youth House is a temporary detention facility for youngsters who are awaiting court action or placement following trial. How can this youngster be encouraged to continue an educational program that is meaningful and exciting enough to capture his interest? Officials at the Youth House seem to have found the answer. By 9:00 A.M. each morning, students are ready for their half hour session at three computer terminals which are designed to act as teacher, tester and reinforcer.

As the student "signs in" to the machine, his particular "program" is ready to respond to his own instructional level and take him through a series of skill tests and drills.

Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) is a system for presenting various subjects and course material to students on an individualized basis. The three terminals at the Youth House are tied into an IBM 138 at the County's data processing center. The

program, begun in February 1976, was the first such effort of its kind in the state and has developed into an integral part of the school program at the facility.

"In just over two years, we have been able to reach hundreds of youngsters and identify their level of performance almost instantly" said Susan Gladstone, CAI director.

"Too many of the educationally disadvantaged children of the inner city have trouble mastering the basic skills of learning. We, as educators, know all too well that if these skills are not developed, these children will have trouble for the rest of their lives."

Primarily, the computer programs are geared to upgrading math and reading skills. If a youngster scores less than 80% on a test, the computer will adjust to a new level and work with the child on that level. It is a "search and find" effort combined with intensive drill.

"This is all done, of course, in conjunction with classroom instruction," noted Harvey Keyes, Youth House director.

"The most exciting part of this entire program is the student response," said Miss Gladstone. "They'll stop by and ask if they can be next, or when they can sign-up for another turn."

The program is run through the cooperation of the County and Director of Data Processing, John Holl.

Holl said that new terminals are presently going into the Correction Center to make the program available to inmates at the Caldwell facility. "That program should be underway within one or two weeks."

"We're also going to hook up the Essex County Vocational Schools to the system and eventually, I think, we can see the day when we might offer computer time to local school districts who might wish to install terminals in their schools."

CALL FOR ACTION

THE BOARD OF FREEHOLDERS HAS CALLED UPON VARIOUS NATIONAL, STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND INDIVIDUALS TO TAKE ACTION ON MATTERS THAT AFFECT ESSEX COUNTY RESIDENTS.

The Board of Freeholders unanimously adopted a resolution calling on the Congress to approve a four-year extension of the Compensation Employment and Training Act (CETA) and to maintain the integrity and strength of the program by providing for strong local decision-making authority. Freeholder Director Reita Greenstone noted that CETA was established in order that counties and large cities could address the problem of unemployment among the disadvantaged with a minimum of federal control and interference.

"Now, there is the threat that Administration proposals, presently under consideration will act to impose tighter federal restraints on some very effective and locally meaningful efforts," she said. Copies of the resolution were sent to the appropriate Congressional sub-committees and New Jersey Senator Harrison A. Williams whose Labor Committee will ultimately deal with the legislation.

The Board of Freeholders, through its County Counsel Peter Stewart, called upon Human Services Commissioner Ann Klein to implement a Federal regulation that would provide Medicaid reimbursement to the County for prisoners held at the County Jail. The Freeholders noted that a section of the Federal Medical Assistance Program provides for such reimbursement for prisoners during the first calendar month of their incarceration. Freeholder Finance Chairman Harry McEnroe said, "Last year, Essex County's bill from the Medical School alone was nearly \$400,000." Prisoners were also treated at St. James' Hospital, United Hospital and East Orange General Hospital.

"We have cases where medical care for prisoners who have been severely shot and wounded range as high as \$17,000, said the Freeholders.

"If the action we're taking is successful, counties throughout the state would save millions of dollars per year."

Stewart noted no legislation was necessary; Mrs. Klein could implement payment by fiat.

The Board of Freeholders met with representatives of the New Jersey Department of Transportation to demand that state officials consider alternative solutions to the First Street exit of Route 280 in Newark.

"The congestion at First Street presents a daily inconvenience and a hazard to the hundreds of businessmen, attorneys, university students and county employees who must come to Newark daily," said Freeholder James Zangari. He proposed the widening of the exit by using adjoining city and state property with corresponding one-way traffic directed both north (to Park Avenue) and south on a split First Street.



PRINT CUT — Susan Gladstone, CAI Coordinator at the Youth House, reviews the program with Harvey Keyes, Director, and Freeholder Director Reita Greenstone.



FIRST DAY ON THE MACHINE for several youngsters proves to be quite a challenge as Miss Gladstone answers their questions.

\$600,000 Essex Area Aging Plan Approved

Freeholder Director Reita Greenstone and Bernard J. Gallagher, Director of Essex County Office on Aging announced that the State Division of Aging has approved a \$600,000 County Aging plan for 1978.

The plan entitles the county to receive federal funding under Title III of the Older Americans Act. It identifies specific areas of need for seniors in all 22 municipalities of the county and specifically funds a wide variety of programs geared to the individual needs of each town.

The grant makes possible the continuation of the following: town mini-buses for transportation to shopping malls, doctor or clinic visits, recreation centers, etc.; nutrition centers, health care clinics—both dental and medical; a dental health screening program, education and recreation programs; outreach services to identify isolated and needy seniors; a telephone reassurance program and a home repair program that provides free labor for minor "handyman" repairs.

"The Essex County Department of Aging services the needs of more than 150,000 senior citizens," said Mrs. Greenstone. "Our program has come to be recognized nationally for the scope of the services we deliver and for our attempt to reach out and involve thousands of seniors from aerobic dancing to 'meals on wheels.'

"One of the programs for which we have received national attention is our Home Health Care Project. Its purpose is to prevent premature or unnecessary nursing home confinement through at-home medical and social services. It is unique, in that it receives County funding as well as C.E.T.A. and Federal Title XX funds," she said.

Gallagher noted that "H.E.W. Secretary Joseph Califano requested a copy of the program and subsequently congratulated Essex County on its innovative efforts in this area."

Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders

PHILIP C. ROTONDO
County Supervisor

REITA GREENSTONE
Freeholder Director

MARTIN G. SCATURO
Deputy Director

REVEREND RUSSELL FOX

THOMAS P. GIBLIN

THOMAS M. MCGORMACK

HARRY A. MEENROE, JR.

JOSEPH C. PARLAVECCHIO

DONALD M. PAYNE

JAMES ZANGARI

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EMMA N. BYRNE
Director



Seniors regularly take advantage of a wide range of medical and dental screening services available through local senior clubs and at a number of senior housing sites. From left, a nurse conducts an audio screening clinic; seniors wait their turn to be tested for diabetes; and as a regular part of good health — good exercise through a seniors aerobics program that reaches 2,000 seniors weekly throughout the county.

ESSEX COUNTY
BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS
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